

**BUDGET WORKSHOP
BOROUGH OF WASHINGTON, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY
WASHINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES – January 29, 2008**

The Regular Meeting of the Borough Council of Washington, Warren County, New Jersey was held in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall at 7:30 P.M.

Roll Call: Higgins, Woykowski, Cioni, Oakley, Van Deursen, Turner – Present
Housel – 7:45 p.m.

Also Present: John Corica, Borough Manager
Steven Farsiou Esq. Municipal Attorney
Kristine Blanchard, RMC Borough Clerk

Mayor Van Deursen led everyone in the flag salute.

Mayor Van Deursen read the following Statement into the Record:

“The requirements of the ‘Open Public Meetings Law, 1975, Chapter 231 have been satisfied in that adequate notice of this meeting has been published in the Star Gazette and posted on the Bulletin Board of Borough Hall stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting as required by law.

Motion made by Councilman Turner, seconded by Councilwoman Oakley to enter Executive Session. Councilman Higgins was excused from Executive Session due to a conflict.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Motion Carried

RESOLUTION TO ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting under certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Borough Council of the

Borough of Washington, in the County of Warren and State of New Jersey as follows:

- 1. The public shall be excluded from the remaining portion of this meeting.**
- 2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed is as follows:**

**Contracts
Personnel**

Motion made by Councilman Turner, seconded by Oakley to exit Executive Session.

Ayes: 6, Nays: 0
Motion Carried

Motion made by Councilman Turner, seconded by Councilman Housel to resume regular session after a five minute recess.

Ayes: 6, Nays: 0
Motion Carried

Council returned to open session at 8: 50 p.m.

Manager Corica indicated that the Recreation Commission recently advertised for a new Recreation Director. He stated that this may be an opportunity to look at the structure of the Recreation Commission. Council may wish to consider having the Recreation Director report directly to the Borough Manager. The new Recreation Director will have increasing responsibilities due to the pool renovations and the Borough redevelopment projects. Manager Corica explained that having the Recreation Director report to the Manager will allow for more administrative efficiency, and will lesson the burden of the fiscal responsibility of the recreation volunteers.

Councilwoman Oakley asked what the role of the Recreation Commission would be. She asked if the commission would take on more of an advisory role. Manager Corica stated that is a policy decision of the Governing Body.

Councilman Woykowski asked if the Recreation Director, if reporting directly to the Manager, would assume the position of a department head. Manager Corica stated yes.

Mayor Van Deursen asked if all of the part time recreation employees would be the responsibility of Recreation Director. Manager Corica indicated that yes, the employees would report to the director. The volunteers would definitely be needed to oversee the sports activities. The Director would oversee recreation overall and be responsible for the budget.

Councilman Higgins asked is this was a direct result of what happened at the park. Councilman Cioni stated yes. Councilman Higgins stated that Council has had no discussion on this topic. Councilman Higgins stated that the Recreation Department should be heard and allowed to voice their concerns.

Councilman Woykowski explained that this has been discussed. Two years ago an advisory committee visited other municipalities that had a similar recreation committee as the one being proposed.

Councilman Higgins stated if Council wants to take away the Recreation Commission and their fiscal responsibilities, you will need to take a close look at every department.

Recreation Chairperson, Dawn Higgins stated she has worked with the Governing Body for eight years. She had no idea this was happening and had no idea Council would consider changing the structure of the Recreation Commission.

Mayor Van Deursen explained that the Manager is proposing alleviating the administrative burden of the volunteers. The only areas that the Recreation Commission would not be in charge of are the budget and personnel.

Councilwoman Woykowski stated she feels redevelopment is a vital part of recreation. Taking a good look at the Borough recreation program now will help the Borough move forward in the redevelopment process. She also commented that senior services should be a part of the recreation program as well. In the municipalities visited by the advisory committee several years ago, the senior citizen programs were run by recreation. By having a Recreation Director, this person will be in a better position to manage these areas.

Ms. Higgins stated that the Recreation Commission is aware of those issues and has asked Council in the past for money to hire a full time Recreation Director and was turned down. The Commission has also asked for money for a recreation master plan and was turned down for that as well.

Councilman Cioni stated that the Recreation Commission won't change the Council's mind on this matter, and Council will not change the Recreation Commission's mind either.

Councilwoman Oakley suggested a draft Ordinance be prepared for discussion at the next meeting. The Recreation Commission can be given an opportunity to discuss with the Governing Body at that time. The draft Ordinance should outline the position of the Recreation Director, reporting to the manager, and what role the Recreation Committee will play.

Councilman Cioni motioned to have the Manager and Attorney draft an Ordinance based on Councilwoman Oakley's suggestions. This motion was seconded by Councilman Housel.

Ayes: 6, Nays: 0

Motion Carried

At this time Councilman Housel excused himself from the meeting.

Budget Review

Miscellaneous Items

Manager Corica indicated that \$18,000 can be taken out of the salary and wages line item. He also stated that by taking the new backhoe out of the DPW budget will save \$3,500. The new library windows can be removed from the budget as well.

Manager Corica informed the Governing Body that the surplus used for the 2008 budget will be \$545,000.

The Manager and Governing Body discussed a part time maintenance worker for Borough Hall.

Council also discussed Belvidere Avenue and Grand Avenue reconstruction. Council decided that these items will be revisited when the entire budget is near completion.

The Borough Clerks, Mayor and Council, and Administrative budgets were also reviewed with minor changes made.

Hearing no further business to come before Council, it was moved by Higgins, seconded by Turner that the meeting be adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Ayes: 6, Nays: 0.

Motion carried.

Mayor Marianne Van Deursen

Kristine Blanchard, RMC Borough Clerk